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## Newcomer Champion Awards: 2011 Recipients

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Created in 2007, the Newcomer Champion Awards recognize people and groups who have made a difference in their community and the province through active citizenship and engagement. In 2011, the awards were expanded to recognize a broader range of Ontarians who champion voluntarism, proudly support newcomers, and advocate greater social and civic inclusion.

**The 2011 Newcomer Champion Award recipients are:**

### **Community Leader**

**Mei Hwei Grace Chen** of Cambridge, a committed community health worker for immigrants and refugees, mentor for newcomers in the Chinese community and advocate for low-income families in the Waterloo Region.

**Julie Ling Ma** of Hamilton, a senior student who volunteers on the Hamilton Youth Advisory Council and helped advise local organizations on how issues such as immigration, poverty and the environment affect newcomer youth.

**Paul Nguyen** of Toronto, a community leader in the Jane and Finch area who promotes civic engagement with at-risk youth through Jane-Finch.com, a direct link to the heart of this community.

**Mitra Salarvand** of Guelph, co-founder of the Iranian Canadian Community of Guelph. She is a passionate advocate for newcomers and a respected builder of bridges between diverse communities in the Guelph area.

**Karen Thorpe** of Toronto, a community worker who coordinates the Women and Family Programs at Yonge Street Mission. These programs empower immigrant

women to access social services, learn new skills, develop supportive friendships across cultures and become leaders in their families and the wider community.

### **Newcomer Champion**

**Changer ma communauté** of Ottawa, a group which integrates newcomer students at the Collège catholique Samuel-Genest into the Franco-Ontarian education system through a variety of programs that foster academic achievement and social inclusiveness.

**Helping With Furniture** of Ottawa, a volunteer-run organization that collects and delivers furniture and household items to help refugee claimant families start their new lives.

**Parkdale Community Legal Services** of Toronto, a community-based legal clinic that helps immigrants and refugees achieve status in Canada, and promotes understanding of legal rights and protections for newcomers in their homes, workplaces and communities.

### **ChangeTheWorld Youth Ambassador**

**Jocelyn Bovay** of Belleville, who mobilized her peers to volunteer and participate in the ChangeTheWorld campaign for two years by supporting worthy causes such as cancer research and local food banks.

**Kelly Ann Lovell** of Kitchener, who helped the Kitchener-Waterloo Volunteer Centre to develop *Passion for Progress*. The inter-school competition connects young people with volunteer organizations using an online matching program, as part of the 2011 ChangeTheWorld campaign.

**Saquib Mian** of Mississauga, who engaged more than 100 youth to volunteer in four events during the 2010 ChangeTheWorld campaign. The events were designed to promote a healthy lifestyle, raise money for various charities and promote young artists from Mississauga.

**Znak Ovenden** of Welland, who helped organize Welland Spring Clean-up events during the 2011 ChangeTheWorld campaign. The initiative pairs high school students with youth with disabilities providing an educational and empowering experience for both.

**Michelle Vecchione** of Thunder Bay, who helped organize different fundraising events including a barbeque, and selling hotdogs and cotton candy to help send kids with physical disabilities to Easter Seal Summer Camps during 2010 ChangeTheWorld campaign.

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